

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: PINT, BL

SUBJ: CHRUCH AND STATE STEP BACK FROM CONFRONTATION

REF: LA PAZ 292

1. RELATIONS BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE TOOK AN APPARENT
TURN FOR THE BETTER JANUARY 22. COL. PEREDA, THE MINISTER OF
INTERIOR ATTENDED A MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE BOL-
IVIAN BISHOPS CONFERENCE WHICH HAD ASSEMBLED TO FORMULATE THE
CHURCH'S POSITION ON A SERIES OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING POLICE
ACTION AGAINST CLERGYMEN OR CHURCH PROPERTY (SEE REFTTEL).
AFTER PEREDA'S PRESENTATION, CARDINAL MAURER INFORMED THE
PRESS THAT CHURCH AND STATE HAD INITIATED A USEFUL DIALOGUE
AND THAT BOTH SIDES WERE INTERESTED IN AVOIDING CONFRONTATION.

2. STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS BY CARDINAL MAURER AND BY COL.
PEREDA COINCIDED IN THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) THE GOB GAVE THE CHURCH ASSURANCES OF FULL FREEDOM TO
CARRY OUT ITS WORK, ESPECIALLY IN THE MINING AREAS, IN ACCORD
WITH THE LAW; (B) COL. PEREDA, WITHOUT CONCEDING THE BASIC
PROPRIETY OF THE GOB ACTION IN CLOSING THE RADIOS IN THE MINING
AREAS, RECOGNIZED THAT THE AGENTS CHARGED WITH SILENCING THE
TRANSMITTERS DID SO IN A IMPROPER MANNER (MALA FORMA); (C) A
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COMMISSION COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OBLATE FATHERS

(MANAGERS OF RADIO PIUS XII), THE BISHOPS, AND THE STATE WILL STUDY THE PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY THE CLOSING OF THAT RADIO; (D) THE GOB WILL REPAIR DAMAGES TO THE RADIO AND RESTORE PROPERTY LOST DURING THE POLICE RAID; (E) THE GOB RELEASED THE TWO OBLATES WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED DURING THE POLICE RAID.

3. IN VIEW OF THE RENEWED DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE, THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE BISHOPS CONFERENCE DECIDED NOT TO ISSUE ANY FORMAL STATEMENT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE COUNCIL'S DELIBERATIONS.

4. COMMENT: CHURCH AND STATE HAVE DEFUSED THE MOST SERIOUS SET OF DIFFERENCES TO HAVE ARISEN BETWEEN THE TWO INSTITUTIONS SINCE THE BANZER REGIME CAME TO POWER.
STEDMAN

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